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Armenian *anjrew* 'Rain'

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The Armenian word for 'rain', *anjrew*, has not yet found a universally accepted etymological explanation. The attempts quoted by Adjarian (*HAB*) all fail to satisfy the formal side of etymology. Similarities with semitic words are regarded by G.B. Djahukian, with reason, as merely coincidental (Djahukian 1987:466).

A suggestion made by V. Pisani (1944:158) - in fact the only one quoted by J. Greppin (1983) noted, though, as "quite impossible" - to connect *anjrew* with Lat. *imber* 'rain' by means of a common base **mb^hregh*, developed by metathesis into Pre-Armenian **ṛghreb^h* is likewise quite improbable, given the fact that in other instances there is no metathesis of labial and "guttural" consonants, cf., *barjr* 'high' < **bḥṛgh*-, and, from the same root, (h)*am-baṛnam* 'I raise, rise' < **-bḥṛgh-nā*-.

Among the words for 'rain' in other IE languages, we find Germanic and Greek providing the phonetic material that could almost be used to compose a Pre-Armenian word fitting in with the established Lautgesetze. Germanic **regna-* (Goth. *riḡn*) contains a vibrant, a nasal, and a guttural, but in an unfavorable order and, if connection with Lat. (ir)*rigare* 'to irrigate' and/or Lith. *rōkti* 'fein regnen' shall be maintained, with the wrong guttural, which, however, constitutes a problem of its own already for the Germanic word and its etymology (cf., IEW 857 with a root-alternation **reḡ/rek̑/rek̑?*). Only a voiced aspirated palatal would yield Armenian *j*. Such a consonant has been posi-

ted by Pisani l.c. for the said root, which, he believes, has entered into a "Verschränkung" with the root underlying Lat. *imber*.

Greek βρέχω 'to wet, steep' (from 5th cent. BC); (later, NT-Greek:) 'to rain' and βροχή 'rain' (Democritus and NT-Greek) likewise, if deriving from *mreg^h (IEW 738 s.v. *meregh*), make use of a nasal, a vibrant, and a guttural, but again the order is unlikely to underlie Arm. *anjrew*, nor does the voiced velar aspirate favor a connection with the Armenian word.

Against this background an attempt is made here to demonstrate the possibility of an Indo-European etymology for *anjrew*, which, however, will turn out to be a formation idiosyncratic to Armenian, but in that respect fitting into the picture of the other ancient IE languages, where, in contrast to some elementary bodyparts, no "Indo-European" word for 'rain' can be reconstructed, cf., among others Hitt. *ḫeuš* (cf., Neu 1981), OInd. *varṣá-*, Avestan *vār-*, Greek *ὄρεός*, etc.

Before we can proceed to the suggestion that I want to make, two remarks have to be made with regard to the prehistory of Armenian.

First, concerning the development of IE *t in Classical Armenian: following Pisani (1951:70, cf., also Klingenschmitt 1982:98f.) I consider Arm. *w* as, among others, the regular outcome of IE *t in post-vocalic position when not followed immediately by a palatal vowel, or *a (?), cf., 3.sg.aor.med.-pass. *ber-a-w* 'he was carried' with -*w* derived from IE *-to, and *arawr* 'plough' < *aratro- (IE *H₂arH₃tro-).

Second, the IE prefix *sṃ- 'together' (for etymological details, cf., IEW 902ff.) appears in Armenian as *ham-*, *han-*, *am-*, and *an-*, with no discernible regularity in the variation of initial *h-*, and with assimilation of the nasal to the following segment, cf., *ham-baṛna-* and *am-baṛna-* 'to raise', *han-gist* 'silence' < *sṃ-k^wiH₁-sti-, *am-usin* 'Ehegatte' < *sṃ-H₁eukeno⁻¹ (examples from Klingenschmitt 1982); no clear instance for *an-* can be given.

Typological evidence for the semantic motivation underlying words for 'rain', such as collected by Buck (1949:67f.), includes as sources words for 'flow', 'pour', 'wet', etc. Thus, Lat. *pluit* 'it rains' is connected with a root *pleu (IEW 835) 'flow; swim; pour', as in OE *flówan* 'flow' etc.; or Lith. *lytùs* 'rain', verb *lýti*, vs. *líeti* 'to pour' (IE *lǵ̃ - IEW 664); for more examples, cf., Buck, l.c.

Among the IE roots that fit in phonetically and semantically, there is only the root underlying OInd. *kṣárati* 'flows', Avestan *γžaraiti* 'flows', i.e., *kṣar-* and *γžar-*, which can be taken into account.

The IE shape of this root largely depends on the answer given to the question whether Greek *φθείρω* 'to destroy, waste' must be considered cognate or not. Against earlier doubts (e.g., Gunnarsson

1971:61), P. Hollified (1978:182) holds that such a connection can be maintained, but he starts from the same semantic paraphrase of the root as did previous authors, viz., 'to flow'.²

Since the question of including or excluding the Greek word is of no particular relevance to the issue discussed here, I will, following Gunnarsson's doubts and Mayrhofer's skepticism (1986:157f.), assume a different origin of the Greek and Indo-Iranian words, which leaves us free to determine the root-anlaut as a plain velar aspirate voiced stop as against a labiovelar aspirate voiced stop in case of the inclusion of $\phi\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho\omega$. If, however, the Greek word had to be included - and only a more thorough typological study can tell - then a labiovelar anlaut would be inevitable. Still, for the satem-languages under discussion there would be no difference.

Thus the IE root underlying OInd. $k\acute{s}ar-$ and Avestan $\gamma\acute{z}ar-$ can be taken to be $*gh\delta h\acute{e}r-$ (cf., IEW 487 $g^u h\delta\acute{e}r$), meaning 'to flow, to stream'. From this root a Pre-Proto-Armenian form $*s\acute{m}-gh\delta h_r\acute{e}to-$ is assumed to have been built to express the meaning 'rain'.

The semantic motivation underlying the Armenian neologism can easily be understood by comparing phrases like colloquial German "es schüttet/giesst sich heute wieder was zusammen!", referring to long-lasting rain: "it is pouring (lit. together) down today, i.e., it's raining cats and dogs". This might explain the use of $*s\acute{m}-$, which corresponds to Greek alpha intensivum, in this context.

The main problem of this etymology consists in deriving Arm. j from IE $*gh\delta h$. As J. Schindler (1977) has pointed out, IE 'thorn' can be derived phonemically from underlying dental stops by a set of rules (cf., now also M. Mayrhofer 1986:151ff.). Since, however, the question of phonemic status of thorn-clusters is not at stake here, we may assume that late Proto-Indo-European had thorn-clusters of the traditionally reconstructed, Brugmannian types, i.e., clusters differing as to voice and aspiration, with aspiration extending to the final member of the cluster according to "Bartholomae's law" (cf., Schindler 1976:623f., 1977:25n.): $*k\theta$, $*gh\delta h$, $*k\theta$, $*gh\delta h$, $*k^w\theta$, $*g^wh\delta h$. The reflexes of these clusters in Greek clearly demonstrate the correctness of Schindler's assumption concerning aspiration, yielding Greek $\chi\theta$ from IE $*gh\delta h$ and $*gh\delta h$, and Greek $\phi\theta$ from IE $*g^wh\delta h$ vs. Greek $\pi\tau$ from IE $*k\theta$ and $*k\theta$, and $\pi\tau$ from $*k^w\theta$.

In Avestan, $\gamma\acute{z}$ is expected to be a continuation of IE $*gh\delta h$ and $*g^wh\delta h$, whereas Vedic uniformly shows the reflex $k\acute{s}$, which is by no means the only Indo-Aryan outcome of IE thorn-clusters; Middle Indic dialects exhibit a clear-cut difference between originally (aspirated) voiced and voiceless clusters, cf., on the one hand *chanati* and

chaṇati 'hurts' from the Aśoka-inscriptions, Pali *khaṇati*, Skt. *kṣaṇóti* and Greek *κτείνω* 'I kill', i.e., IE **kθen* (Gunnarsson 1971:47ff. with lit.), and on the other hand Prakrit *jhīṇa-* 'wasted away', Skt. *kṣīṇá-h* 'diminished, weakened' (cf., *kṣīṇáti* and *kṣíyate* 'destroys, is diminished'), Greek *φθίνω* 'to decay; perish', IE **g^{wh}δhei* (IEW 487). A look into Turner (1966) reveals that the phonemes corresponding to Skt. *kṣ* in Modern Indo-Aryan are voiceless stops, when *kṣ* derives from Indo-European voiceless clusters **Kθ* or **Ks*; they are aspirate voiced stops, when *kṣ* derives from IE aspirate voiced thorn-clusters.

Thus, to Skt. *kṣar-* 'to flow' we find a corresponding Middle Indic form with initial *jh*, which is met with in Skt. *nir-jhara-* 'waterfall' (cf., KEWA I:452 s.v. *jharā-*), considered to be due to Middle Indic influence (cf., Wackernagel 1957:164). The root *jhar-* is found in several Modern Indo-Aryan languages as, e.g., Hindi *jhar* 'source, waterfall', *jharnā* 'to flow, stream; fall, drop', or, with a closer semantic relationship to the etymology of *anjrew*, Nepali *jhari* 'rain, shower' and *jharnu* 'to drip, pour, rain'.

Obviously then the treatment of thorn-clusters follows the general pattern of voice (and aspiration) distinctions in the Indo-Iranian languages, to the exception of Sanskrit, where some kind of analogical leveling of voice distinctions in clusters involving *s* - maybe starting from *s*-aorists and desideratives and extending to all clusters of the shape "stop + sibilant" - must be assumed³ (cf., Schindler's (1976:630ff.) discussion of these clusters within a framework of ordered rules).

Armenian is one of the languages where the IE tripartite stop distinction is preserved, in the "traditional model" as well as in the "glottalic model" of Indo-European. Therefore we can expect Armenian to follow its way of treating voice and aspiration in IE stops also with regard to Late IE thorn-clusters, unless there is convincing evidence for a merger of the latter in just one mode of articulation, as we have to assume for Vedic.

Now, G. Klingenschmitt in his book on the Armenian verb discusses a vast number of etymologies, often novel, inspiring, and well checked. Among these we find (Klingenschmitt 1982:187ff.) a new suggestion for *anc'anem* 'to pass, cross', by which this verb is derived from **sm-g^{wh}θ-nh-*, where *-g^{wh}θ-* is viewed as resulting from an IE root **d^heg^{wh}-*, attested by Vedic *daghnóti* 'misses' and Greek *φθάνω* 'come or do first or before others, Ger. *zuvorkommen*'. Klingenschmitt considers this etymology as the only evidence for IE **g^{wh}δh* > Arm. *c'* and assumes a merger of **ghδh*, **g^{wh}δh*, and **kθ* in Arm. *c'*. It must be noted that the author writes *ghp*, *g^{wh}p*, and *k^p* respectively,

thereby suggesting an assimilation of the voiced stops to a following voiceless interdental fricative.

On the basis of Schindler's statement concerning the effect of Bartholomae's law on thorn-clusters (quoted above) and in view of the Armenian treatment of IE voice-distinction, it is quite unlikely that the merger supposed by Klingenschmitt should have happened. Since the number of etymologies that can be quoted as reliable evidence for the treatment of IE thorn-clusters is relatively small (cf., Mayrhofer 1986:151ff, who even reduces Schindler's limited sample), and since, furthermore, Armenian hitherto probably shows just one clear example of a regular development of voiced (aspirate) thorn-clusters, viz. *jukn* 'fish' (IE **ǵhδhuH-*),⁴ I would prefer to interpret the development of thorn-clusters according to the pattern of the treatment of voice-distinction in stops, as was suggested above to do with non-Vedic Indo-Aryan. That is to say: IE voiceless thorn-clusters develop into Arm. *c'* (cf., Arm. *c'* in 'kite', cognate with Greek *ἰκτινος* 'kite', deriving from IE **kθiHno-*), whereas voiced aspirate clusters develop into Arm. *j*; if there were also voiced unaspirate clusters, they would have to be expected to yield Arm. *c*, but there is no evidence for such a cluster in IE.

If then Klingenschmitt's etymology of *anc'anem* and the sound-change underlying it (viz., **ǵwhδh > c'*) have to be abandoned for systematic reasons,⁵ then an alternative explanation of *anc'anem* is required. Klingenschmitt's unfounded rejection ("die bisherigen Deutungen von *anc'ane-* sind semantisch unbefriedigend", Klingenschmitt 1982:187) of Aghayan's (1976:82) proposal to explain *anc'anem* as **snt-ske-* with a root **sent-* (a verb of movement, perhaps with Pokorny:) 'to take a direction, go' (IEW 908), is surely unjustified in view of a number of indubitable typological parallels involving as starting point the meaning 'go, step' and the like, cf., French *passer* from Vulgar Latin **passare*, built on *passus* 'step'; Logudorese *barigare* 'to pass' from Lat. *varicare* 'to put the legs wide apart, straddle'; most languages use a derivative of verbs meaning 'go', as Ger. *vorbeigehen*, Russ. *pro-xodit' mimo*, Georgian *ga-di-s* 'passes' vs. *mi-di-s* 'goes', *mo-di-s* 'comes' (root *di-* 'go, come'), etc.

A still different alternative might be seen, though, in an explanation of *anc'anem* as **H₁ṇk-ske-* from a root **H₁nek-* (IEW 316): OInd. *asṇóti* 'reaches', (Greek *ποδ-ηνεχής* 'reaching down to the feet', Lith. *nešù* 'I carry', etc., with a basic meaning 'to reach', which, from a semantic point of view, provides a well fitting starting point for the Armenian meaning 'to pass, cross', since the type of change, where a linguistic sign denoting a phase of an action or process is, at a later stage,

used to denote the action or process as a whole, is rather well established, cf., H. Kronasser's "Sinnstreckung" ('stretching of sense'), whereby the semantic relationship between OInd. *ghóṣati* 'calls' and Avestan *gaoš-* 'to hear' is explained (Kronasser 1968:90ff.); other examples are Modern Greek *τρώγω* 'I eat' < Class. Greek meaning 'I gnaw, nibble', or French *manger* 'eat' from Latin *manducare* 'chew'; Engl. *reach* from OE *ræcan* 'to stretch out (the hand)'.

This, however, would force us to abandon Klingenschmitt's main explanation of *hasanem* 'I arrive' as deriving from **H₁ṛk-* with an "unetymological" Arm. *h-* (op.cit.:212) and consider his alternative **sH₁k-*, reduced grade of **seH₁k-* as in Greek *ἦκω* 'to have come, be present', as preferable.

Hopefully having shed some light upon the question of the treatment of voiced aspirate thorn-clusters in Armenian, we can now proceed to the final part of *anjrew*, which is less complicated.

A suffix *-eto-*, which on the basis of the above remark concerning IE **t* in Armenian would have yielded **-ewo-* and eventually *-ew*, is likely to be assumed, since *anjrew* originally was an *o*-stem, taking over *i/a*-inflection already at the times of the oldest written records. Adjarian (*HAB* s.v.) states that of twenty-one attestations in the Bible four are still indicative of *o*-inflection, and seventeen of *i/a*-inflection.

This suffix is, in connection with meteorological phenomena, known from Greek, where it is met with in *ἕτερός* 'rain', *νιφετός* 'falling snow' and other, related words (cf., Waanders 1974:3, Leukart 1986:343). In *anjrew* it is attached to the zero-grade **ghδhr-* of the root **ghδher-*, just as in Greek *νιφ-ετός* as compared with *νείφ-ει* 'it snows'. It thus adds to the numerous isoglosses between Armenian and Greek, whereas the root bears witness of an isogloss between Indo-Iranian and Armenian. If this etymological suggestion stands up to closer scrutiny, then another Armenian word of the basic vocabulary (as conceived by M. Swadesh and his followers, cf., for the complete Armenian list Djahukian 1978:194ff.) would have turned out to be made up of inherited, Indo-European material.

NOTES

¹ Similarly, but apparently without having noticed Klingenschmitt's etymology, Pârdulescu *AArmL* 7, 1986:45ff.

² Hollifield takes this etymology for granted in order to back a new suggestion of his own, by which Vedic *dhan-* 'flow, run' is connected with Greek *(απο)θνήσκω* 'die'; on Rgvedic *dhán(u)va-* cf., now T. Gotō (1987:178ff.), who fixes the meaning as 'run, stream', said of soma and, once, of Agni. There can be no doubt that the meaning 'to die',

found with the post-Rgvedic compound *pra-dhanva-* is 'regularly' developed from the simplex's basic meaning 'to run'; still, the case of *kṣárati* 'flows' and *φθεῖρω* 'destroy' can by no means be taken as an obvious parallel.

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⁴ Arm. *arj* 'bear' (IE **H₂r̥kθo-* should have yielded **arj*) seems, like a number of cognate words, to have been modified on tabuistic grounds.

⁵ In contrast to Klingenschmitt who states, that the sound-change quoted "may be regarded as likely on aprioristic grounds" (op.cit.:191), which he derives from the evidence provided by the development of **-sg^W-*, **sk-*, **sk-* > *c'*, I doubt the validity of the comparison made, because the development of clusters with (voiceless) *s* as a first member is quite a different matter from the point of view of voice-assimilation.

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IEW see Pokorny

KEWA see Mayrhofer

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